

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (withdrawn) A method of curing a hose length on a mandrel, the hose length comprising at least one layer of vulcanizable material, the method comprising the step of inserting the hose length onto the mandrel and curing the hose, the method being characterized by:

the mandrel comprising a pair of extending legs wherein at least one of the mandrel legs has a curved portion and

inserting the hose length onto the mandrel by inserting a first hose end onto one mandrel leg and then inserting a second hose end onto the second mandrel leg.

Claim 2 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1, the method further including the step of, prior to inserting the hose length onto the mandrel, partially curing the hose length.

Claim 3 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1 wherein the hose length is comprised of at least two layers of a vulcanizable material, and the method is further comprised of, prior to inserting the hose length onto the mandrel, partially curing the hose length to a degree sufficient to promote adhesion between the material layers.

Claim 4 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1 including the step of, prior to inserting the second opposing end of the hose length onto the second mandrel leg, twisting the hose length to form a loop in the hose length.

Claim 5 (withdrawn) A method of forming a hose in accordance with claim 1 wherein the mandrel has a hollow tube located between the ends of the mandrel legs, and the method includes the step of, prior to inserting the second hose end onto the second mandrel leg, placing the hose into the hollow tube.

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (currently amended) A mandrel ~~in accordance with claim 6~~ for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposing legs having free ends configured for

location within opposite respective ends of a hose to shape the ends from an original external geometrical configuration into an altered external geometrical configuration, and wherein both legs have a curved portion.

Claim 8 (currently amended) A mandrel ~~in accordance with claim 6~~ for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposing legs having free ends configured for simultaneous location within opposite respective ends of a hose to shape the ends from an original external geometrical configuration into an altered external geometrical configuration, and wherein at least one of the mandrel legs has a curved portion and wherein the mandrel is further comprised of a hollow tube located between the free ends of the opposing legs.

Claim 9 (currently amended) A mandrel ~~in accordance with claim 6~~ for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposed legs having free ends configured for location within opposite respective ends of a hose to shape the ends from an original external geometrical configuration into an altered external geometrical configuration, and wherein at least one of the mandrel legs has a curved portion and wherein the mandrel is further comprised of a base rod onto which the opposing legs are secured and at least one of the legs is threaded onto to the base rod such that the one leg independently adjusts a separation distance between the one leg and the opposite leg and the one leg independently adjusts a rotational position of the one leg relative to the opposite leg.

Claim 10 (currently amended) A mandrel in accordance with claim 9 wherein both legs are threaded onto the base rod such that each leg independently adjusts a separation distance between the legs and each leg independently adjusts a rotational position of the leg relative to the opposite leg.

Claim 11-14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (currently amended) A mandrel ~~in accordance with claim 12~~ for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposed hose-shaping legs having free ends configured for receipt within opposite respective ends of a hose, and further comprised of a connective member connecting ends of the opposing legs and including adjustment means for altering the angular relationship and separation distance of at least one opposing leg relative

to the opposite opposing leg and wherein the connective member comprises an elongate bar extending between the ends of the opposing legs.

Claim 16 (currently amended) ~~A mandrel according to claim 12 for forming a hose, the mandrel being characterized by a pair of opposed hose-shaping legs having free ends configured for receipt within opposite respective ends of a hose, and further comprised of a connective member connecting ends of the opposing legs and including adjustment means for altering the separation distance and rotational relationship between at least one opposing leg and the opposite opposing leg and~~ wherein the adjustment means comprises a threaded connection between at least one leg and the connective member.

Claim 17 (currently amended) A mandrel according to claim 16, wherein a threaded connection attaches both legs to the connective member whereby each leg independently adjusts the separation distance and rotational relationship between the opposed legs.

Claim 18 (canceled)